

Dear Co-Chair Kennedy, Co-Chair Miner, Co-Chair Demicco, Vice Chair Flexer, Vice Chair Gresko, Vice Chair Somers, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Please accept this public hearing testimony for the following two bills, and a request to bring up HB 5615 (which would allow towns to ban trapping):

*OPPOSE SB 522: There are much more humane solutions to bears' encroachment on human habitats. Bears are not naturally violent, and only attack humans if they are sick or feel that their lives are in danger. Instead of increasing hunting, we need to better protect the bears' natural habitats and assist residents with the tools they need to effectively "bear proof" their properties.

*OPPOSE HB 5499: This bill does nothing to reduce the incidence of Lyme disease, and will not reduce the deer population in any sustainable way, as the population will bounce back. This is an outrageous and unnecessary expansion that is not fair to the overwhelming majority of non-consumptive users (e.g., hikers, birders, mountain bikers).

*I ask that you consider bringing up HB 5615 for a public hearing. HB 5615 would give local control to allow municipalities to determine whether or not they want to ban trapping. Trapping is cruel and indiscriminate (dogs, cats, and birds are often caught in these traps), and not effective in curbing undesired behavior.

Thank you for your time and your service to our state.

All the best,
Shannon Mykins
New Haven, Connecticut